

141.25



ADDRESS

DELIVERED

AT THE OPENING

OF THE

COLUMBIAN COLLEGE

IN THE

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

JANUARY 9, 1822;

BY THE PRESIDENT,

THE REV. WILLIAM STAUGHTON, D. D.

MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

WASHINGTON CITY:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY ANDERSON AND MEEHAN,
COLUMBIAN OFFICE, NORTH E STREET.

1822.

Adams
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District of Columbia, to wit.

***** BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day [of January, in
: the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-two, and of the
: SEAL. : independence of the United States of America, the forty-sixth, Anderson &
: Meehan, of the said district, have deposited in the office of the Clerk of the
: District Court for the District of Columbia, the title of a book, the right whereof
they claim, as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

*"Address delivered at the opening of the Columbian College in the District of Columbia,
January 9th, 1822; by the President, the Rev. William Staughton, D. D. Member of
the American Philosophical Society."*

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to the Act, entitled, "An Act supplementary to an Act entitled, 'An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the public seal of my Office, the day and year aforesaid.

EDM. J. LEE, *Clerk of the District Court
for the District of Columbia.*

COLUMBIAN COLLEGE, Jan. 9th, 1822.

REV. SIR,

AT a meeting of the Board of Trustees of this Institution, the following Resolution was unanimously adopted, viz.

“ Resolved, That the thanks of the Trustees be presented to the President, for his Address at the opening of the College; and that he be requested to favour the Board with a copy for publication.”

Very respectfully,

By order of the Board,

ENOCH REYNOLDS, Sec.

REV. W. STAUGHTON, D. D. President }
of the Columbian College. }

COLUMBIAN COLLEGE, Jan. 9th, 1822.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received your note, communicating the resolution of the Board of Trustees; for which permit me, through you, to beg their acceptance of my sincere acknowledgments. The Address, delivered at their request, is cheerfully submitted to any arrangement, which their personal wishes or the welfare of this Institution may require.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

WM. STAUGHTON.

ENOCH REYNOLDS, Esq. Sec.

ADDRESS.

MAN, on his entrance on existence, is a stranger to objects all around him. With the properties of bodies, and with the characters of animated nature, he becomes acquainted, only as his inquiring senses and his busy reflections communicate information. Unconscious of danger, he possesses no fear. The flame that consumes, and the sun that cherishes, equally entertain him. The polished toy and the sharpened steel, alike engage his grasp. With the same eagerness he drinks the most nourishing fluid and the deadliest poison. The steep of the precipice and the curl of the surge, contribute only to his amusement. To him, as to a visitant in a foreign country, every thing is novel. The heavens present a concave of mysteries, and with the earth he is as little familiar as he is with the powers of intellect, and with the high, and sacred, and interminable destinies to which his nature is susceptible of elevation. He

needs an Interpreter, who shall explain to him the language of universal nature; a Guide, who shall conduct his inquiries along the smoothest and brightest path; a Monitor, who shall caution him against the perplexities of vice and error, and point him the road which leads to honour and virtue—to life and immortality.

But who shall assume this responsible service?—It appears to have been first undertaken by Jehovah himself. The elements of language were, probably, from Divine suggestion. Created in the image of God, the progenitor of our species must not only have been upright and holy; but, to a considerable extent, have been blest with an intuitive capacity of discovering truth, independently of the slow and wavering process of observation and inference. When probably, at most, his lamp of existence had burned but a few days, “the Lord God” brought “every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air unto Adam, to see what he would call them.” Yet, so accurate were the names assigned to the animals—descriptive, it is likely, of their dispositions and habits, that “whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.” But, through what channels, and to what extent soever the Divine Majesty imparted knowledge to our common parent, in relation to the ordinary modes and pursuits of popular education, man is ordained to be the instructor of man.

Nations have, in some instances, assumed the instruction of youth. Minos decreed that the Cretans, in their several cities, should subsist on the same aliment, eat at the same table, and be educated together in the same exercises, arts, and maxims. He endeavoured to inspire the youth with a persuasion that the laws were divine. Plato professes to admire the attempt, without admitting that such an insinuation was calculated to abridge inquiry and to immortalize mistake. In the jurisprudence of every country, many duties will be found to have been omitted, and many crimes unchastised. During the Persian monarchy the sentiment was enforced, that children are the property of the state. In early life they were taught to hurl the javelin, and to draw the bow. As years advanced, they were directed to hunt in the forests, to acquire the habit of watchfulness by keeping guard by night, and to learn obedience to military orders, by a servile attention to their governors. From twenty-five years of age until fifty, they fought the battles of their country; after which they were regarded as its counsellors and statesmen.

Lycurgus, deriving perhaps from Crete the same idea, claimed the children of Sparta as the property of the republic. Mechanical arts were considered the business of slaves. The sciences were banished, as tending to enervate the energies of the mind. To obey the commands of their superiors, to endure

without complaint the severest hardships, and to conquer or perish in the field, were prime attainments. No monuments of Spartan genius or taste are to be found ; and for the fact that their government ever existed, the world is indebted to the pages of their enemies. Most inhuman was the statute of the legislator of Lyconia, that only strong and well-proportioned children should be permitted to live ; the deformed or tender were destined to perish. Had such a law been in operation in civilized society in modern times, the public ear would never have been tuned by the versification of Pope ; no intellectual relish would have been produced by the elegant essays of Addison ; the stanzas of Watts had never been sung in Christian congregations, nor had families been instructed by the expositions of the evangelical Doddridge. The models of national education to which we allude, were at variance with the native powers of the mind. They were adapted to keep society in a condition perpetually stationary ; they deformed the system of morals, by making the *love of country* the predominant, and almost the only virtue. They called into constant exercise the harshest passions, and totally shut out the softer sex from that high improvement, of which their faculties are so exquisitely capable.

The proper, the natural instructors of children, are parents. On the birth of an infant, the Creator

may be considered as addressing the father or mother, in the language of the daughter of Pharaoh, “Take this child, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.” Religion, not less than nature, enjoins on parents to seek the happiness of their offspring, of whose involuntary existence they have been the occasion. At the same time, to use the language of Dr. Smith, “we may, perhaps, lay it down as a general rule, that whatever unnecessarily opposes the happiness of a child is not within the rights of a parent.” A child requires present support, and it is the duty of a parent to afford it. It needs a counsellor, a protector, one that will administer consolation in the hour of affliction; and directs its eye to the wisdom of a father, and to a mother’s sensibility and tenderness. Natural affection, indeed, so much engages itself in the future welfare of children, that enlightened legislators have been content to leave the instruction of youth exclusively to parental arrangement. That the education of their offspring properly belonged to parents themselves, was a sentiment generally admitted in Rome, especially during the Augustan age. The gratitude of Horace for the care of his father is sufficiently known; and the solicitude of the parent of Cicero was, in the orator, again displayed in relation to his beloved Marcus.

It is apart from our design to insist on what has been denominated physical education. The intimate

connexion of the body and mind, will suggest to every judicious governor of youth the necessity of a course that shall best ensure firmness of constitution. Cleanliness of person, and exposure to free and wholesome air, the exclusion of feathers and down from the dormitory, muscular and manly exercise, plain and salubrious food, are considerations to which parental concern cannot too early be directed. Simplicity of dress may be preserved, without following the advice of Mr. Locke, to have the shoes of a boy ‘so thin that they might leak and *let in water* whenever he comes near it;’ and cheerfulness of spirits excited, without copying the example of the father of Montaigne, who, in a morning, always awoke his son by the sound of music.

Milton, in his treatise on Education, well observes, that “the end of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents, by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love Him, to imitate Him, to be like Him.” If the sepulchre were the ultimate term of human existence, the range of instruction might properly be limited to “the things which are seen and are temporal:” but man will retain the full exercise of his powers when the pillars of creation shall have fallen. The present is the mere title-page of his being. Possessing faculties imperishable as the throne of God, he shall expatiate through the scenes of eternity, asso-

ciated with intelligences of a moral mould resembling his own, under a consciousness of the smiles or displeasure of his Maker and Judge. An artist once said, "I paint for eternity." What blessings, may we not expect, shall descend upon our species, when every parent, when every preceptor, educates for eternity! Though an instructor be convinced of his incapacity to remove the spiritual diseases incurred by the apostacy, he can, at least, bring his children to the pool of healing. He can inculcate, early, the idea of the being of a God, and that this God is the Creator of all things—a truth that the philosophy of Greeks and Romans never knew. He can teach him the importance and beauty of sincerity and truth, of justice and temperance, of diligence and modesty. He can recommend charity to the afflicted, and caution the unsuspecting bosom against the deceitful attractions of vicious society. He can conduct his easy pupil to temples where the word of life is proclaimed, and give strength to his precepts by the prudence of authority and the charm of example. Duties of this kind were enjoined on the ancient Israelite. "These words which I command thee, this day, shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way." Learning, without virtue, is a torch in the hand of a lunatic. The gloomy associ-

ation of knowledge and vice, transformed into devils the sons of the morning. It is the interest of every parent to remember, that religion is the bond of society, the source of amiable affections, and the cheering assistant of intellectual pursuits. Bacon and Boyle, Locke and Newton, had, in all probability, shone with less resplendence in the firmament of science, had their attachment been inferior to the oracles of heaven, and to the devotional exercises of the closet and the sanctuary. “I was my father’s son,” said a prince of Israel, “tender and only *beloved* in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said, Wisdom is the principal thing ; exalt her, and she shall promote thee ; she shall give to thine head an ornament of grace : a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.”

At no point will a contemplative parent, in general, find himself more the subject of perplexity, than while endeavouring to determine the future profession in life that his son shall pursue. Ambition, and affection itself, are here uncertain advisers. It is happy for man, that a benign Providence often intervenes, and discloses a track which sagacity, thoughtfulness, and anxiety would never have discovered. The disposition of a child requires to be carefully studied ; the germinations of his genius must be solicitously inspected, and the tenour of his propensities, as far as practicable, betimes ascer-

tained. As great a variety is found in minds, as in soils.

“ Hic segetes, illic veniunt felicius uvæ.”

It would be obviously absurd to pursue the same course with a youth whose inclination is directed to agricultural, commercial, or mechanical employment, as with one who aspires at the character of a physician, a statesman, or an advocate at the bar.

In the prosecution of what is called a liberal education, two languages, in addition to our maternal one, require to be known—the Latin and the Greek. This is sometimes regarded, but improperly, as a serious impediment in the progress of useful knowledge. It is admitted that the Romans, besides their own language, were desirous of having their youth instructed only in the Greek ; while the Greeks, regarding all the nations of the world as barbarians but themselves, were abundantly satisfied with the cultivation of their native tongue. In the acquisition of a foreign language, the rational object is to obtain useful information, or to impart it. The first of these, for example, in reference to Brahminical philosophy, was the object of Sir William Jones ; the latter has been the principal aim of Dr. Carey and his associates. Here and there a language may be found, that will amply remunerate the labour of acquiring it ; and the Greek and Latin

are of this description. If all that were contemplated were merely an ability to convey ideas in a larger variety of words—since, whatever advantages the memory might obtain, the understanding would remain destitute of cultivation—the service ought never to be required. Equally useless would the toil be found, were nothing more attempted, to use the expressions of the first Latinist of his age, than “a preposterous exaction, forcing the empty wits of children to compose themes, verses, and orations, which are the acts of ripest judgment, and the final work of a head, filled, by long reading and observation, with elegant maxims and copious invention.” The pupil who is perusing the ancient classics, is improving his taste, enlarging the circle of his information, attaining the habit of thinking with order and boldness, and of expressing his ideas with precision and elegance, with majesty and fire. It is objected, that we may become familiar with the monuments of genius and learning, which the Grecians and Romans have left, through the medium of translations. I answer, and hazard the assertion, the spirit of their writings has never been translated. Neither the *Iliad* of Pope, with all its attractive melody, nor the *Iliad* of Cowper, with all its laboured exactness, is Homer’s *Iliad*. These illustrious men, with their pencil and chisel, copied from the life, and have given us an exquisite picture, a

well-finished statue; but the mere English reader will discover little, in the translations referred to, of the animation, the simplicity, the beauty, and the profusion of the Grecian bard.

That parent employs language entirely too frigid, who states that his son is learning Latin and Greek. He is learning more. He is gaining a knowledge of general grammar, of the formation of sentences, and of the nature and use of figurative expression. Is he reading the speeches of the great orators of antiquity? His mind is insensibly preparing to defend the rights of his country, with the irresistible vehemence of Demosthenes, or with the skill, the fulness, the magnificence of Cicero. From the Greek and Roman historians he derives more than a simple acquaintance with important facts: he acquires the art of distinct and lucid narration, and a relish for elegant writing. Their philosophers inform his understanding, and, for the most part, edify his morals; while their poets enliven his imagination, and refine his discernment. He has been in the company of the wise and the eloquent, and, unawares, has imbibed their spirit.

It is unnecessary I enlarge on the studies which a collegiate course embraces. The acquirement of other languages, by no means involves the neglect of a critical acquaintance with our own. To the improvement of their mother tongue, the ancients were

scrupulously attentive. The names of Roman orators are yet on record, who taught some of their emperors Latin, notwithstanding it was their native language. The knowledge of the earth and of the heavenly bodies; the philosophy of matter, of mind, and of morals; the mathematics in theory, and in their practical application; history and chronology, composition and elocution, demand the labours of a student, and will, within these walls, be assiduously taught. In our colleges, Natural History seems to be too much neglected. It is, in Sweden, the study of the schools, and the path to respectability and preferment.

A question, and certainly a serious one, has often occurred to the minds of parents—Which is to be preferred, a public, or a private education? In behalf of private tuition it is urged, that a tutor can best superintend the instruction of a few; that in public schools the empire of vice is more extended and dangerous; that seclusion is favourable to knowledge and virtuous habits; that it is of importance that youth spend much of their time with persons advanced in life; and that some boys, feeble of constitution, may be exposed to the oppression of the healthy and the strong. Cowper has been referred to as an example; and it is evident the poet, in his *Tirocinium*, has summoned the powers of his genius to impart popularity to these considerations.

Imposing as such ideas may seem, their propriety is seriously questionable. Where discipline is maintained, by a happy association of mildness and energy, it is of little importance whether pupils be few or numerous. Colleges, under proper government, are by no means inauspicious to the habits of virtue : on the contrary, they contain the best correctives of vicious propensities. Dr. Barrow, whose acuteness of observation has been rarely exceeded, and whose experience as a professor was extensive, asserts with confidence, that he had seldom known a youth deeply involved in depravity at schools, who did not bring the seeds of it along with him. Desirable as it may be thought that every Telemachus have a Mentor by his side, the voice of reason, the impulse of feeling, intimate distinctly that youth are the natural companions of youth. In public seminaries as much seclusion is enjoined and practised, as learning can demand, or health can authorize. Shut up, if it be thought best, the delicate plant in a well-secured greenhouse ; but remember, the saplings that are to become oaks of Bashan and cedars of Lebanon, ask for breezes, and showers, and sunshine. At public schools emulation is ever on the stretch ; a generous sense of honour is inspired ; the science of human nature is, to a considerable extent, attained ; and such friendships, as is remarked by Tertullian, are frequently contracted, as solace and

ennoble the whole progress of future existence. It is not a truth, I appeal to universal experience, that living a while in a college destroys a relish for the endearing attractions of a father's dwelling. It is not an inglorious delight in indolence, but a well-retained affection for home, that is ever calculating the day that ushers in a vacation. I am satisfied, from long observation, that our young men, with few exceptions, leave their Alma Mater, not simply with an informed understanding, but with their manners softened and their hearts improved. Parents are constantly exposed to the mistake of overvaluing the faculties of their children. The apologies of natural affection are indeed tender and forcible, but require to be admitted with caution. Boys of corrupt disposition, whether educated in the retirement of a parlour, or introduced into the public halls of science, will sagaciously find, or model for themselves, associates whose inclinations shall coincide with their own. Other circumstances, apart from cultivation, distinguish Arabia the Desert from Arabia the Blest.

In support of the system of public education, the erection of Colleges has justly been considered as constituting a new era in the annals of literature. The Academy and the Lyceum were the glory of Greece. In Persia, in the Indies; in Britain and Gaul, colleges flourished under the superintendence of the Magi, the Gymnosophists, and the Druids;

but it was in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries of the Christian era, that these institutions put on the character of importance and stability for which they continue to be distinguished. The supposition that the University of Oxford was founded as early as the days of the illustrious Alfred, is destitute of probability. The hints that suggest it have been discovered to be interpolations. His name is not introduced into any of the records or statutes of that establishment. Merton and University Colleges, in Oxford; Peter House College and Clare Hall in Cambridge; and perhaps we may add, the University of Paris, first confirmed to Europe an idea of the utility of collegiate institutions, of which she has since so abundantly availed herself. For the encouragement of learning, what are called degrees were devised. **BACHELOR**, at the time to which we refer, was a title of honour given to a young cavalier on his receiving the military girdle. The transfer was easy and acceptable from the occupation of the warrior to the science of the schools. In the thirteenth century, this degree was first introduced by pope Gregory IX. The degrees of **MASTER** and **DOCTOR** succeeded. Trivial as such honours may seem, the idea of obtaining them operates as an incentive to industry. Inspiring the dread of dishonour, they arouse from slumber the indolent and neglectful; while persevering merit, assured of the classic laurel,

exerts itself with vigour and success. Of the excitement in favour of literature, produced when colleges began to be erected, some idea may be formed from the fact, that in the year 1262, the University of Bologna alone contained ten thousand students. As early as 1340, twenty thousand were in the University at Oxford. In the same century, on a question agitated in the University of Paris, ten thousand *graduates* gave in their suffrages. The advantages these institutions presented to the juvenile inquirer, it is admitted, were more specious than solid ; for, in the age we are describing, the grand luminaries of modern science were below the horizon.

If Europe deserve the tribute of praise for having disseminated literary establishments over all her nations, a meed not less conspicuous is due to the venerable forefathers by whom our country was colonized. The winds and billows that pressed them to the shores of the Atlantic, transported the purest morals, the most rational and enlightened ideas of devotion, and the steadiest habits of industrious life. Scarcely had they begun to till the earth for their subsistence, before their views were directed to the culture of the mind. The trees of the forest furnished their academic groves, where their youth were educated in whatever could contribute to use, and ornament, and liberty, and honour, and virtue. Without entering into the history of the earlier

schools, every lover of learning in the United States must recollect, with grateful pleasure, that the morning sun shed its rays on Harvard College in Massachusetts nearly two hundred years ago. The talents and exertions of a missionary from England, the Rev. James Blair, obtained a charter for the College of William and Mary, in Virginia, in the year 1693. More than an hundred and twenty years have elapsed since the college was founded in Connecticut, whose name has embalmed the memory of governor Yale. Nassau Hall in New Jersey, from which have come forth so large a number of physicians, advocates, and divines, was thrown open about the year 1738; and the institution which has grown into "the University of Pennsylvania," was originated in 1750. The University in Rhode-Island, deriving its present name from the munificence of Nicholas Brown, Esq. appears to have been projected in the Philadelphia Association, in the year 1762. Nurtured by the pious care of the Rev. Dr. Manning, supported in a good degree, in its youth, by the collections of the Rev. Morgan Edwards and the Rev. Dr. Hezekiah Smith, and encouraged by "the adventurous and resolute Browns," it has attained to a well-nerved maturity, and is "stretching forth the curtains of its habitation."

The swell of a tide elevates every thing subject to its influence. Proportionate to the progression of

population; to the spread of commerce over the ocean; to the advancement of home manufactures; to the improvement and extension of agriculture, has been the diffusion of learning. Recumbent no longer, she rises—the stability, the glory of the Republic. In the eastern world, villages and towns are rarely increasing. The gazetteer of one generation scarcely requires a new edition for the succeeding. On the contrary, in these United States, new hamlets and cities are reflected from a thousand streams, and new edifices ascending for the resort of the Muses. From thirty to forty colleges are already flourishing among us, under the direction of men whose qualifications possess the esteem and veneration of a discerning community. Schools are multiplying for the purpose of imparting to the future heroes of the Union the knowledge of military tactics, and of exploring and enlarging the regions of medicine and law.

In the midst of other improvements, the pious and enlightened mind must have observed, with conscious pleasure, the strong efforts that are employed by Christians of well nigh every denomination, for communicating instruction to approved young men who promise usefulness in the ministry; especially when it is recollected, that *ignorance*, among what were called the clergy, was a sleeping and pestilential morass, whence arose the low exhalations with which Europe, for ages, was darkened. It is the

part of candour to acknowledge that, to the colleges attached to the cathedrals, we are indebted for the preservation of the works of ancient authors, which, in other situations, the rudeness of the Vandal and the Goth might have destroyed; but at the same time it must be confessed, that what was taught of grammar and of magic, of mathematical figures and of divinity, contributed nothing to the expansion of intellect, to the developement of the rights of society, or to the spiritual and elevated worship of the living and true God. During the period which Prideaux denominates “the reign of the schoolmen,” theological questions were decided by the writings of a heathen philosopher, translated into Latin from a version made by the Saracens, the followers of Mahomet.

The Jewish nation was never distinguished for the refinements of science. It presents to the world, notwithstanding, examples of religious and moral instruction, which must ensure respect. Without admitting, as some of the Hebrews assert, that there were schools anterior to the deluge, of which Adam, and Enoch, and Noah, were the successive superintendents, it is certain that, at Naioth in Ramah, schools of the prophets existed. Sons, or, as the word may import, students of the prophets, were found at Bethel and in the plain of Jericho, under the care of Elijah and Elisha. These, or similar

seminaries, probably continued until the Babylonian captivity. Synagogues, which, after this catastrophe, began to grow in number, in some degree superseded the use of schools, but did not destroy them. A short time before the birth of Christ, Jewish literature had gained a considerable ascendancy, by the instructions of Hillel and Shammai, who, according to Jerome, were each at the head of a celebrated establishment. Even after the overthrow of Jerusalem, the Jews had their academies in the various countries into which they were dispersed. Calmet hesitates not at stating, that “on the ruins of these schools were formed those of Egypt and Europe.” It is an interesting fact, that several of their most eminent teachers, Maimonides, Aben-Ezra, Jarchi, Rabbi Nathan, and Kimchi, flourished a very short time before the founding of European colleges.

It is far from being the sentiment of the General Convention of the Baptist Denomination, or of any of the individuals who have been concerned in the erection of the building in which we are this day assembled, that a liberal education is an essential qualification in a Christian minister. A vast number of excellent men are to be found in the churches, and will be succeeded by hundreds more, who, without the advantages of literature, familiar with the doctrine and power of the gospel, and called, as we believe, of God, to their office, have been instrumental in the

conversion and sanctification of the hearts of multitudes. May the Supreme Head of the church, still more abundantly crown their pious and laborious endeavours. But these very men are, for the most part, among the first to regret that the treasures of knowledge have, to them, never been unfolded, and many of them are among the most liberal encouragers of theological schools. Attainments, such as the apostles of Christ were permitted to realize, who for three years passed their pupilage under the instructions of their heavenly Master, and who were afterwards endowed with the astonishing gift of tongues, it were vain to anticipate; but surely the improvement society has made, during the past thirty years, intimates the propriety of a corresponding one in the minister of the sanctuary. Surely, without relying on a translation, how much soever approved, it is desirable that a public teacher be able to read the pages of inspiration in the languages in which they were written. Unacquainted with the construction of his mother tongue, with the history of nations, with the economy of the earth and heavens, and with the science of composition, he must deplore the privation he suffers, when called to defend the truths which are dearer than life, in the presence of adversaries who have arrayed themselves in all the armour which learning can furnish. Of the sober use made

by the apostle Paul of his familiarity with Grecian poets, we have a beautiful specimen in his speech before the Areopagus at Athens. In the present age, when missionaries are passing into almost every region of the earth, it is evident that, to enable them with the greater facility to acquire new languages, and to translate the scriptures from the original text, a sound and extensive education is not only desirable but necessary. It is admirably ordained in Providence, that the powers of reasoning during the stages of childhood and youth are feeble, while the memory is in full vigour, and industriously engaged in collecting materials for the future service of the understanding. This arrangement in nature inculcates the propriety of commencing a course of study, and particularly the study of languages, where so much is to be recollected, as early as practicable. Pious youth, called by the churches to officiate in the ministry of the gospel, should beware lest the golden period for mental improvement for ever escape them. The observations I am offering are predicated on the fact, that our college embraces a Theological as well as a Classical department.

It is unnecessary to insist on the sacred importance of education in general. Many of the ablest authors of ancient and modern times have exhibited its value. What inheritance, equally precious and permanent, can a parent bequeath? Where is the man

that does not aspire at the consolation of reflecting, in life's decline, that he has trained up his children in the way that they should go? One consideration must not be forgotten. Children are the hope of the coming age. A few years will introduce upon the stage of public action another generation of men, who, when we are sleeping with our fathers, will offer to the world examples, and spread through it principles, that shall prove useful or detrimental, corresponding with the direction that education shall have communicated. Other physicians will enter the chambers of the afflicted; other divines will be heard from our pulpits; and other civilians display their talents in courts of judicature. Yonder magnificent CAPITOL will concentrate the wisdom of other senators, and resound with the periods of other representatives. Let the parent, the patriot, the Christian, seriously ponder on this idea, and he will no more neglect his duty than he can cease to love his children, his country, and his God. The formation of the manners of youth is the moral fulcrum by which we may raise the world.

States, the most enlightened, without claiming the business of education, have promoted its solid interests by their liberal patronage. Their example is worthy of universal adoption. It is by such means that a commonwealth throws bulwarks around her, that shall remain firm and unimpaired, when brass

and marble shall have fallen and decayed. Learning has a tendency to introduce amiableness and dignity into domestic life ; it secures to its possessor treasures infinitely superior to all that avarice has ever collected, vanity recounted, or adversity swept away. Spencippus is said to have placed round his school the pictures of Joy and Gladness, with the intention of signifying that the business of instruction should be rendered as pleasant as possible. Perhaps the philosopher had in view a still higher idea ; and was desirous of intimating, that learning is a basis on which a large proportion of the comforts of our present existence will be found to rest.

The Columbian College, whose Faculty have this day been announced and recognized, for the present is open chiefly to classical and theological students ; but should the blessing of heaven descend on the projects, and crown the exertions of its friends and supporters, additional edifices will soon be erected, where lectures will be delivered on the Institutes of Law and on Medical Science.

Contemplating the rapidity with which these buildings have arisen, the preservation of the workmen from the slightest harm, and the liberal contributions that have been obtained, and are still arriving ; and remembering, that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, we must feel that an offering of undissembled gratitude is due to the

Father of Lights. IN HIS NAME the foundation has been laid; and to the charge of his gracious Providence, the destinies of the Columbian College are, with humility and satisfaction, confided. The recommendation with which the venerable and beloved President of the United States has been pleased to honour the Institution; the testimonials obligingly furnished by the reverend and excellent Professors of the Theological Seminary at Andover; and the approbation expressed by many of our most distinguished citizens, are contemplated with sincere acknowledgment. The friendship which has long subsisted between the Agent of the Board of Managers of the Baptist General Convention and myself, would subject me to the imputation of a mistaken partiality, were I to state half the sentiments I entertain of his toils, his integrity, and his ardour. *His works* shall praise him, and collect round his character the grateful affections of the friends of Religion, of Literature, and of Man. In the President of the Board of Trustees, and, indeed, in each of its members, he has found a faithful and ardent coadjutor.

Among the numerous considerations which afford pleasure to the patrons of our College, and inspire their generous hopes, its *location* must be mentioned. From this hill, as from the eminence on which

Æneas stood, the frequent pupil shall look down
and exclaim—

“ O fortunati ! quorum jam mœnia surgunt.”

He will behold a rising metropolis,—not the city Carthage, but the city Washington. From the window of his study he shall look out and ask—What spot is that whose trees rise high above the surrounding foliage ? and shall learn, it is *VERNON*, where Washington lived—where Washington sleeps. Tully acknowledges the transports he experienced, when he saw the laurel grove where Plato held his disputations, and the porticoes at Athens where Socrates taught. But superior transports shall swell the bosom of the young American, while he gazes on the mount where dwelt the hero, who, with the Eagle for his standard, fought the battles of his country, achieved her liberty, illumined her councils ; and, leaving her a legacy of paternal advice and patriotic example, in peace expired. Imagination, on the soft breezes of evening, shall hear the notes which the trumpet of the Genius of Liberty sounds over his sepulchre ; and affection shall exult and weep for Washington !

When Solomon was anointed to the government of Israel, he was led, at the command of his father,

to the fountain of Gihon. Some of the Rabbis tell us, that it was common when officers were set apart to public, or more private stations, for the ceremonies of inauguration to take place by the side of running water; as if to express a hope that their services, like the stream, might refresh, and fertilize, and continue. Alas! it is the lot of mortals to die!—Rivers will pursue their meanders to the sea, when upon us the night of death shall have fallen. Yet, surely, we may be permitted to express our strong desire, and reverent supplication, that long as the adjacent Potomac shall flow, this seat of learning and virtue may flourish, a blessing to the District—to the Union—to the World.

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